

Second Sunday of End Time

November 8, 2015

John 5:19-24

Happy Harmony Between Jesus and His Father

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Dearly loved by God in Christ,

Jesus just had healed a crippled man at the pool called Bethesda. He did this miracle on the Sabbath. After the Jewish leaders talked with the man Jesus had healed, they began to persecute him for breaking the Sabbath law. In his defense, Jesus responded “My Father is always at work to this very day, and I, too, am working.” In other words, when God the Father is working you get God the Son working too. Jesus thus claimed unity in essence and purpose with God the Father.

The Jews understood what Jesus meant and hated him for it. “For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God.”

Jesus rightful claim of equality with the Father sets the table for our theme on this second Sunday of end time, Last Judgment. **Happy Harmony Between Jesus and His Father.** First, the Father handed everything over to his Son. And, by the Word they share we have resurrection to everlasting life.

Jesus had a caretaker father while on earth. Joseph was Jesus’ legal father and a carpenter. We can suppose Jesus heard and learned a lot about that trade. Whatever Jesus knew and did as a carpenter before his baptism, he learned from Joseph.

Jesus made the point to his enemies that everything he did as the one equal with God the Father, including healing the crippled man, he saw his Father doing. His Father “loves the Son and shows him all he does.” What the Jewish leaders had seen Jesus do was a great thing. The Son had not done it independently from the Father but as one God.

These enemies soon would see the Father do greater things than this healing through his Son. The Father’s greater works are raising the dead and giving them life, and through the Son raising those spiritually dead in unbelief to spiritual life in faith. In Revelation 20, the apostle John calls conversion *“the first resurrection.”* Jesus would proclaim God’s Word to lost and condemned sinners that he is their Savior. The Holy Spirit would bring sinners to faith through that gospel.

In this sense, judgment already takes place. Whoever hears Jesus’ word and believes that the Father has sent the Son “has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.” God the Father has handed everything over to his Son. The Father entrusted this work to the Son of Man, the world’s Savior. Jesus through the gospel gives life to “to whom he is pleased to give it.” This judgment agrees with the Father’s judgment.

You are blessed. The Father’s grace has chosen you in Christ for that spiritual life. God gave it to us in our holy baptisms. God keeps it alive through the gospel in Word and in the Lord’s Supper. This is the work the Father and the Son, as well as Holy Spirit have in common. They are equal to one another in the one divine essence. They agree on the judgment the gospel pronounces on us at Jesus’ empty tomb and that is ours through faith - redeemed, restored, forgiven.

This is the reason why “He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.” The Father has entrusted everything to his Son. By honoring the Son as God, believing in him, you honor the Father as God. To deny the Son is to deny the Father. That is why Unitarian

religions are idolatry. By denying that Jesus is equal to the Father as God, those who diminish Jesus' person do not worship the true God.

Since the Father has entrusted everything to the Son, including judgment, by the Word they share we have resurrection to everlasting life.

Jesus' judgment he carries out for the Father through the gospel takes place not only in the first resurrection to faith. It takes place in the second resurrection "when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out." When all people raised bodily from death stand before the judgment seat of Christ, each of us will see either the evidence of their faith or unbelief. Faith had manifested itself in good works. Unbelief had manifested itself in evil works.

The Father and the Son base judgment solely on Christ's righteousness and not our own. This is the Word they share. Jesus indicates his agreement to this by using his favorite moniker, the Son of Man. Jesus kept the law perfectly for us, then offered his innocent life in our place on the cross. He who believes in Christ will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned.

Jesus does not do this judging by his own authority. He does it by his Father. That is why the judgment will be just, unarguable, and irrevocable. This is why Jesus' judgment will please the Father. There is complete agreement, a working together between Father and Son for they are one God with the Spirit.

As a believer, therefore, you have nothing to fear at the Last Judgment. Through faith you will stand before Christ covered in his blood and with his holy works under the law credited to you. When your works are revealed for all to see, others will see Christ's perfect works. For the believer, Jesus says, there is no condemnation, literally, no judgment. Only unbelievers will be judged as their evil works testify to their rejection of Christ's work on their behalf.

Judgment Day is not when God finally or arbitrarily decides what to do with us. It is not when we suddenly and unexpectedly find out what will happen to us. The Father and the Son desire our salvation in full agreement and speak that agreement in the Word of the gospel that gives us the resurrection to eternal life in heaven.

You and I live in the new life the Son gives through the first resurrection by the Holy Spirit. We will hear Christ's voice at the second resurrection, and our glorified bodies will reunite with our souls. We will stand before our Judge, saints triumphant in heaven. More about that next week, unless of course, God already has made us so. Amen. <SDG>